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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Office of Information

PREPARING FLORIDA-GROWN POTATOES FOR MARKET

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Winter and early spring potatoes are big business in Florida. Annual production has been more than 7 million hundredweight in recent years. In some years, the crop has had a farm value of 25 million dollars. These pictures of harvesting, grading, packing, inspecting, and loading Florida potatoes were taken for USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service.



N-26793--A two-row combine pulled by tractor digs potatoes and dumps them into truck on farm near East Palatka, Florida.



N-26797--Rear view of combine digging potatoes, discarding soil, vines, and weeds, and dumping potatoes into truck by means of rod-chain conveyors.

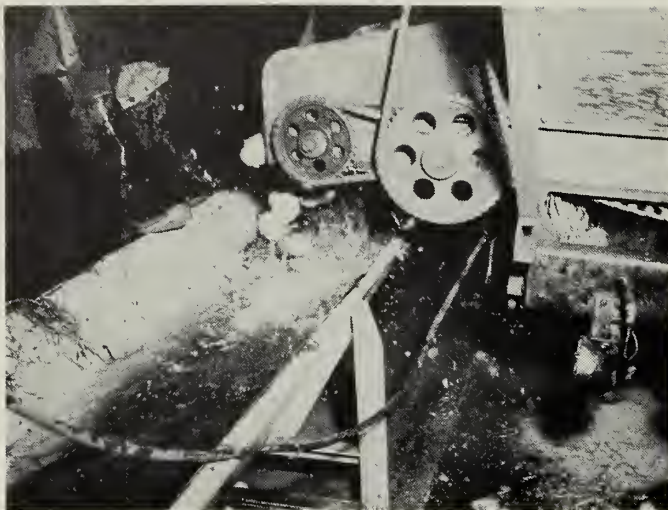


N-26832--Trucks loaded with newly-dug potatoes arriving for unloading at packing plant. Note unloading gate at end of truck.



N-26805--Truck is backed up to conveyor belt, the endgate is opened and potatoes are conveyed to washing machines.

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N-26849--This picture taken at Elkton, Florida, shows potatoes being unloaded into conveyor flume in which water flows continuously from a deep well. Most of the soil is washed away as the potatoes are floated toward packing area.



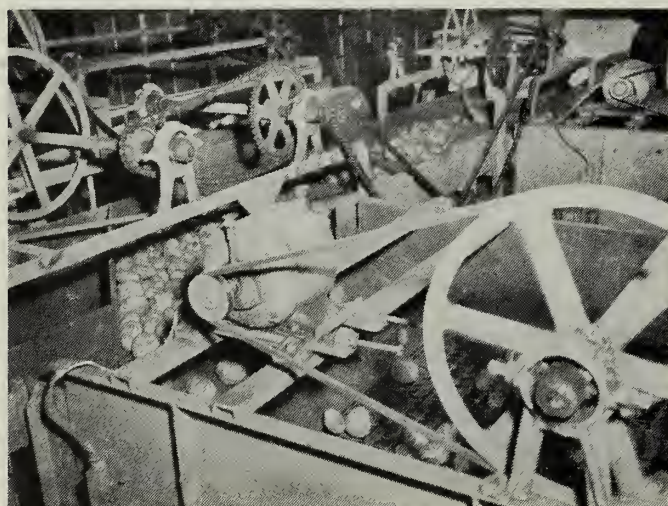
N-26833--These potatoes were bagged in the field, and are being unloaded by hand onto a conveyor-belt leading to washer. This plant is at Hastings, Florida.



N-26834--Close-up of N-26833 showing unloading of bagged potatoes onto conveyor belt in packing plant at Hastings, Florida.



N-26836--Potatoes are emptied onto the main belt that conveys spuds to washing machine at center rear. Note conveyor belts on both sides, making possible the unloading of potatoes from two trucks at once.



N-26839--Close-up of potatoes making right angle turn from receiving conveyor belt into chute containing a mesh-wire conveyor which permits soil to drop to the ground before potatoes are moved into washer.



N-26838--Close-up of potatoes going through washer.



N-26829--Washed potatoes are carried by escalator conveyor toward dryer in this plant at East Palatka, Florida.



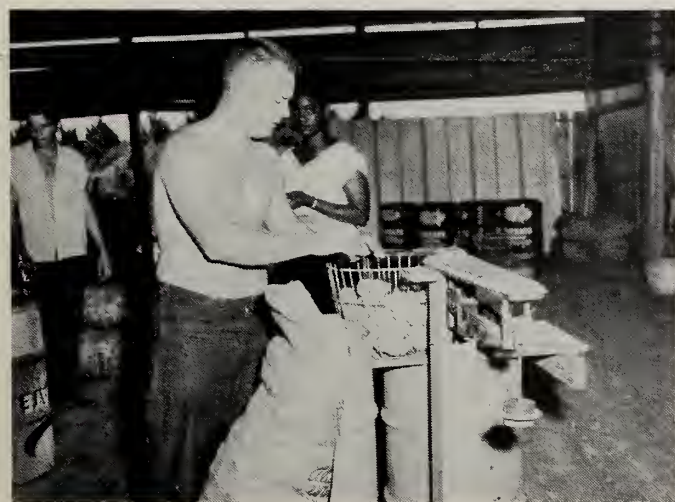
N-26823--Overhead view of potato grading table. Workers in background pick out defective potatoes. Woman at lower right further removes offgrade potatoes. Men at extreme right attend bag filling stations.



N-26811--This packing plant worker is sorting out defective potatoes as they leave dryer.



N-26813--Close-up of workers bagging potatoes at end of sorting conveyor.



N-26824--Bagged washed potatoes are weighed here before the bags are sewed for shipment. Wire basket contains extra potatoes that may be needed to fill out weight.



N-26815--Supervising inspector (right) for Agricultural Marketing Service records size of potatoes on inspection certificate for lot being checked by licensed inspector in plant at East Palatka, Florida.



N-26816--AMS official sizing device is used for checking size of potatoes in lot inspected at East Palatka, Florida.



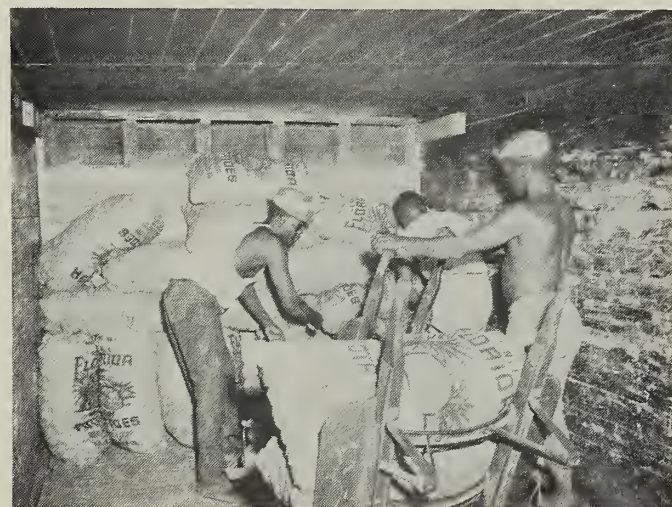
N-26817--Inspector cuts potato to check for internal discoloration.



N-26845--Trailer trucks and refrigerator cars in place for loading potatoes at Hastings, Florida.



N-26842--Worker at Hastings using hand truck to move bags of potatoes into refrigerator car for shipment to market.



N-26844--Bags of potatoes being stacked in end of refrigerator car at Hastings, Florida.



N-26822--Potatoes being stacked in truck trailer for hauling to market. Picture taken at East Palatka, Florida.